

KUNG FU

AUTHORISED EDITION

ANNUAL





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KUNG FU: MISTAKEN IDENTITY



Harry Ryan patted the bulge inside his shirt. He loved the feel of money pressing against his skin, especially since he'd won it from John Vane. A small frown crossed his rugged face. Vane got him going, rubbed him the wrong way. There was something incredibly evil in the gambler that permeated the atmosphere.

Stepping into the mud of the rain-swept street, Harry noticed the hurrying shape emerge from a doorway. It wasn't until they almost collided that he realised the other was Chen Lee, the young Chinese owner of their local hand-laundry.

Chen glanced up, grinned. Neatly side-stepped the rancher. A wave enough of a greeting on a night like this.

Harry smiled, patted the passing shoulder. He was reminded of a bundle of dirty linen out at the ranch and made a mental note to bring it to Chen's the next day.

As Harry made his way to the livery stable, Chen mounted the opposite boardwalk. Late as it was he knew Rose would have a hot meal ready.

Their arrangement worked out for both of them. She gave him food and he laundered her cafe tableclothes for free.

Chen had nearly reached the dimly-lit Palace Cafe when he heard the scuffling footsteps behind him. He began to turn, wondering if it was Harry again, when the noise of a sixgun's hammer being cocked sounded like a thunder roar. Suddenly, the murky night was ripped asunder as the weapon blasted...

Harry Ryan jerked round, saw the shadowy figure of Chen Lee pitch forward and career off the boardwalk into the mud. Automatically, Harry's hand clawed for his old .44... Only to find a naked hip. Unlike some who never went about without a gun, Ryan refused to carry his when he intended to indulge his fancy for card-playing. Now, he bitterly regretted this phobia.

Light from Hanson's general store flooded the street, washed across Carl Ingle's features. Bounced off the Colt in the gunman's hand.

Harry yelled, struggled through the mud in the

direction of the motionless Chinaman. Cold terror filled his brain. Chen Lee was dead! Carl had killed him—and in error...

Ingle holstered his gun, dashed into the concealing murk between the store and Vane's gambling emporium.

Ryan dropped to his knees in the mud, gently lifted Chen in his arms. A gigantic crimson stain covered the Chinaman's chest above the heart. At the range of the murder the bullet had torn straight through the slim young man.

When Sheriff Sam Teal arrived on the scene several people had gathered to form a loose circle 'round the pair in the muddy street. Lifting his head, Ryan said, "It was Carl Ingle. I saw him!"

Teal indicated Chen Lee. "Dead?"

"Yeah! Bring Ingle in, Sheriff—I'll swear on oath he did it!" Harry lowered the Chinaman into the mud, got to his feet. "He ain't ever hurt anyone."

"Tarnation, Harry—what would Carl want to drop him for, then?" Teal asked in confusion.

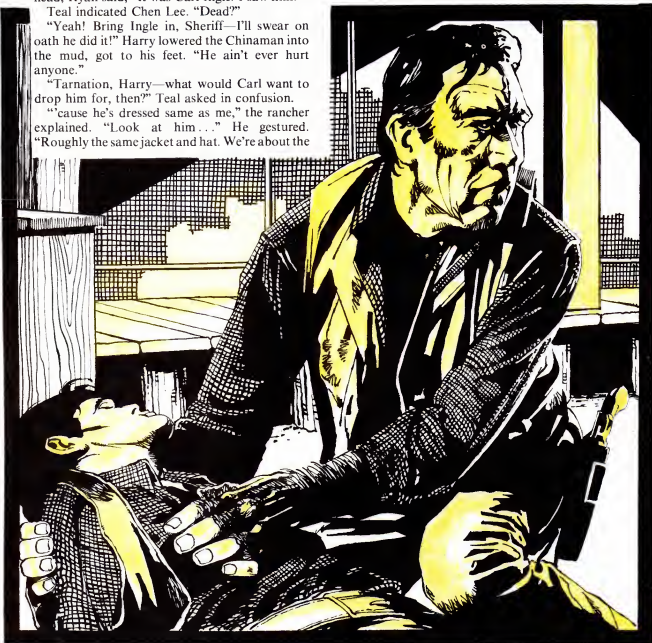
"'cause he's dressed same as me," the rancher explained. "Look at him..." He gestured. "Roughly the same jacket and hat. We're about the

same height and weight, too."

Sam Teal was not the fastest thinker. "So?" he asked, more confused than ever.

"So I won more'n five hundred dollars off Vane to-night," Ryan said calmly. "I reckon he sent his gun-slinger after me with orders to get the money back!"

Reluctantly, Sheriff Teal gave orders for the corpse to be moved and ambled off towards Vane's gambling establishment. The set of his shoulders showed he did not relish the job. People hereabouts didn't antagonize John Vane and stay healthy. Teal liked to believe he was honest and fair but he was getting old, long in the tooth.





Another year and he reckoned on retirement... with his boots still on.

No one noticed the long, lanky man enter town from the east. Only the livery stable attendant was aware of Caine's arrival. As the Chinese-American entered with his bare feet covered in mud and his bedroll dripping rain onto the hay-strewn floor the attendant shuffled forward, eyes filled with unspoken questions.

"I would like to sleep here," Caine said softly, offering money before the other could protest.

News of Chen Lee's killing had reached the man and he had some doubts about letting another 'Chink' stay in his place. But the silver dollar gleaming in Caine's hand overcame his objections and he jerked a thumb at a rear stall, scooped the coin into his pocket and shuffled away in Transaction and conversation at an end.

By morning the rain had stopped and a hot sun was hard at work drying up the mud which had threatened to bring all street movement to a halt. Caine left the livery, went to Hanson's general store. He needed supplies. But when he reached the store he overheard two women talking about the murder of Chen Lee.

Caine forgot about his supplies. He wandered along the boardwalk, conscious of the furtive glances given him by passers-by. When he reached a small shop which said: CHINESE HAND LAUNDRY above the door, he paused. He tried the door and it yielded. He entered.

"Who are you?" a woman asked.

Caine studied her. She was not pretty but neither was she ugly. There was a certain plumpness suggestive of a female who enjoyed her cooking.

"I am Caine," the Chinese-American replied. "I

am looking for the owner of this shop."

The woman sniffed, dabbing at her eyes with a lace handkerchief. "Chen Lee is dead. Shot down last night."

"Have the authorities found his killer?"

"A lot of good it will do..." The woman came from behind the tiny counter, scooping tablecloths over an arm. "I'm Rose. I own a cafe. Chen does... *did* my laundry in exchange for meals. Are you a friend of Chen's?"

"In a sense," Caine explained. "I came to deliver a letter from his grandfather."

The door behind Caine opened and a rugged-looking yet friendly-eyed man blocked the entrance. Rose smiled, said: "Hello, Harry. This is Mister Caine. He came to see Chen."

The rancher stuck out a hearty hand and shook Caine's. "I was the last person to see Chen alive," he said. "I also saw his murderer!"

"Was death instantaneous?" the Shaolin priest asked.

"Immediate! Nobody could have lived a second gittin' shot at that range."

Rose excused herself, squeezed past Ryan. As she vanished the rancher moved deeper into the shop. "She's going to miss Chen more'n most. They used to sit for hours talkin' and looking at books."

He shrugged next. "Do the Chinese have a different burial service than us?"

Caine nodded. "I can perform the rites," he announced. "I took my vows."

"I reckoned you bein' a cut above the ordinary railroad worker," Ryan said. "Look, I've got a spread. Nuthin' gigantic but there's room on it for a grave. I'll make the arrangements with Sheriff Teal."

Riding out on the back of Ryan's buckboard,

Caine recalled his first burial service in the company of blind Master Po. He had been so scared although strangely intrigued. The memory of that night had never left him.

The buckboard hit a rut and Caine steadied Chen Lee's plain coffin. The country around rolled across the gentle foothills of the distant Bitterfoot Range. Harry Ryan gazed at the land, pride in his eyes. Beyond the next valley his cattle grazed, guaranteed a plentiful water supply from the melting snows which always covered the mountain peaks.

By the following day, Caine had the whole story and Chen Lee's body lay in its shallow grave. Duty honoured. Ryan insisted on returning to town that night. To find out when Ingle would stand trial and, as he said, "To rub salt in John Vane's wound."

Leaving the rancher to enter Vane's gambling emporium, Caine went to Rose's cafe. From a window there he could see anyone going in or coming from Vane's.

"Harry is a fool, Rose said. "He got lucky once but Vane won't tolerate that twice."

Caine tasted his thick stew. He could understand why Chen Lee had taken his meals here. The woman was a superb cook. He recalled something Ryan had mentioned. "Were you teaching Chen to read?" he asked.

Rose looked startled. "How did you know?"

"Then you were teaching him," Caine said.

"Yes. He wanted to save his money and eventually go to one of the large cities back east. He thought that being able to read and write would mean the difference between success and failure." The woman got to her feet, fetched a pot. "Here, I won't get any more customers to-night."

Caine did not object although he did not need a lot of food to sustain him. He had been taught how to live off the land through which he travelled.

In Vane's gambling saloon, Harry Ryan held his cards hard against his chest and waited for the others seated at the table to make up their minds over his last wager. He had always suspected John Vane of dealing from the bottom and other card-sharpping tactics. He had not spoken those beliefs aloud, though. In the West a man had a right to draw on anyone accusing him of being a cheat when proof was lacking.

Vane smiled coldly. His handsome, dark features seldom showed any other emotion. And the black eyes certainly did not smile. Never. He clinked the money in front of him, carelessly tossed one hundred dollars into the pot. "Up you fifty, Harry," he said.

One by one the other players dropped out. Ryan looked at his cards. Dead-man's hand! The same combination that Wild Bill had when shot in the back. Two aces and two eights plus a throw-away. He added two hundred to the pot. "And up another hundred-fifty, Vane," he said.

The gambler's face froze into immobility. He chuckled his cards on the table. "Have it," he snarled.

Ryan felt the tension inside him evaporate. The dread of a superstition having foundation in fact had worried him some. Now, he knew. He would be a big winner for the second time.

Caine left Rose's cafe and walked to Vane's. No one noticed as he pushed through the bat-wings and stood by a corner. His eyes flickered over the people watching the game. Most had the appearance of tough, outdoor characters. Some were as shifty as any picture on a marshal's poster.



showing rewards for capture.

Vane was dealing and uncharacteristically dropped several cards on the floor. None of the men at the table objected but Caine noticed that when the gambler retrieved the cards he slipped two into Harry Ryan's jacket pocket. The movement was carried out so neatly and with such dexterity that only the sharpness of a Shaolin trained eye would have spotted it.

Caine started to move, decided against. But he took a mental picture of where everyone stood in the event that intervention to save Ryan's life was necessary.

About five minutes later, Ryan started to deal. Vane bent forward, frowning darkly. "You're a cheat, Ryan," he snarled.

Harry's face paled. The others at the table were

already moving back, pushing their chairs out of gunplay range.

"Grab his wrist, Joe! He's got an ace and king in his pocket!" Vane signalled one of his many minions.

"You're a liar," Ryan roared, recovering.

The heavy man called Joe reached out, grasped Ryan's forearm and kept the hand flat on the table. Reaching over the rancher's shoulder he dipped into the pocket and brought out the cards. Placed them face up on the table.

Vane got to his feet, grim. Brushing aside his frock-coat. The butt of a sixgun showed in a silvered holster.

"I'm not . . ." Ryan began to speak.

Vane's hand moved, a snake striking while his enemy tried to say he wasn't armed.





Faster even than Vane, Caine took off in a fantastic leap, taking the gambler in the back with a vicious double-legged drop-kick. The gun slithered across the floor as Caine landed, brushing Ryan aside. Before any of the men in the saloon could realise what had happened, The Kung Fu Master attacked. All his teaching was against direct assault on other beings but Master Po had told him that saving life sometimes involved hurting others.

Caine believed that now was a time to advance that theory.

He speared into a grunting gun-slinger, striking with the top of his knee, the knee cap and the top of the shin. The man fell away, forgotten. Caine dropped to a crouch — the chicken stance. His elbow slammed into the nearest man, a hand

heeled against another's face and, as he placed his balance on one foot he unleashed a terrific kick straight into Joe's chest.

The bat-wings flew open and Sheriff Teal stood there, sixgun in hand. "Okay... hold it!" he yelled. "Ryan—outside... and take this one-man army with yuh!"

Harry Ryan shook his head in wonderment. "Come back to the ranch, Caine."

The Shaolin priest smiled. "No, thank you," he said. "I have a letter to return and a duty to do."

"Will you ever come back this way?"

"Perhaps, Caine said, eyes already filling with the distant hills. "Perhaps..."

THE END

KUNG FU:

STAGECOACH TO TERROR



The long, lanky man wearing faded trousers and jacket hitched his bedroll over his left shoulder and gazed across the arid country. He had been walking barefooted for nearly four hours under a merciless sun which beat down like a monster breathing fire on its victim. Removing his battered hat, Caine mopped the perspiration from his forehead and sighed.



A plume of dust rose from the valley floor ahead. The creak of leather and wheels reached him. He watched as a jolting stagecoach grew in size, horses lathered and driver's whip snaking and cracking in the air. Then, his eyes went to another movement high in the rocks above the trail.

Caine tensed. The faint flash of sun on metal only increased his natural concern for others caught in a situation not of their own making. His sharp eyes probed the rocks, counted five horses tethered to a lone tree. For once, he wished he had a firearm. A warning shot could alert the stagecoach guard or even scare off the owlhoots waiting in ambush.





Hurrying, Caine went down the steep slope towards the valley. Shale and stone cascaded and rattled, bouncing until it came to rest on a huge shelf jutting out above the dusty trail. Taking a devious route, Caine avoided the ledge and angled across to a scrub-dotted gentler gradient. By now, the stagecoach was less than four hundred yards from where the outlaws waited.

Caine thought of another time when, as a solemn youth, he had accompanied his master from the Shaolin temple . . .

"What is wrong, Grasshopper?" blind Master Po asked as Kwai Chang Caine halted.

"A man," Caine replied. "He is armed and is threatening an old woman."

"Are they man and wife?" Po asked.

"I would not say so."

"And is the man prepared to harm the woman?"

"He has his sword raised, master."

"Then," the blind priest said as urgency crowded his voice, "you must go to her rescue." He waited as sounds of a brief struggle reached his alert ears. As running feet dashed off into the distance. "Ah, Grasshopper," he said as Caine returned to his side. "Did the woman thank you?"

"No, master. She looked on me in expectation of a new assault."

Po sighed, tip-tapped with his stick as he continued along his way. "So often good deeds are taken as motives of greed or personal profit. The woman will reflect and finally realise how mistrusting she has been. Yet, a small portion of her logic will assume that you did have ulterior motives for going to her aid." He laughed gently.

"Cannot people find it in themselves to know good from bad, master?"

The blind man wrapped an arm round his young friend's shoulders. "Grasshopper, the day will come when you must face reality . . . to make the choice for yourself and suffer the consequences of those unable to decide for themselves. After all, if every man and woman knew the difference between right and wrong there would be no need for priests."

A shot rang out and Caine saw the stagecoach lurch in his seat, reins falling from his hands. The horses bolted, startled by the sudden explosion.

Caine took off, leaping over a chasm slashing through the rocks. His rapid descent had put him directly in the path of the runaway horses.



Three separate shots sounded behind the careening stage, without an answer from the shotgun guard. The Shaolin priest briefly wondered about this as he bounded forward with arms outstretched to grab the team leaders . . . forgot the man as the horses whipped past, knocking him off-balance into the nearby scrub.

Leaving the trail, the team entered a box canyon. Caine struggled to his feet, aware of the outlaws mounting to give chase. Not stopping to consider the odds, the one-time priest ran . . . the memory of Master Po's warning in his head. Yet, unable to resist a silent call for help. He sensed panic in the stagecoach, the driver's desperate plight.

Goaded his mount forward, Mark Bullard caught sight of the running man. Bringing his Winchester up he triggered off a shot, saw a spurt of dust by the other's heel. Swearing, he swerved round a rock and by the time he got in the clear again the running figure had vanished into the box canyon. Yelling at his men he spurred his horse, slamming the Winchester back into his saddleholster.

Caine breathed hard. The stagecoach had come to a timely halt by a sheer rock-face. He approached, glanced inside. Two terrified women huddled together in a corner and when they saw him they screamed in unison. He withdrew, went to check the driver and guard.

"Hold it, mister!" The driver tried to draw his .45. Couldn't, and sank back against his seat rest.

Caine climbed up, examined the man. Blood stained the shirt above his heart. With the material drawn back an ugly wound appeared. "You need a doctor," the Chinese-American said.

"Hell's bells, don't I know that!" The driver spat tobacco juice and groaned. "Yuh ain't one of them varmints!"

"They are not far behind me," Caine said quietly.



"See if n yuh can get this . . . this . . ." The driver gestured at the shotgun guard, eyes disgusted and accusing.

Caine looked at the other. The man was in a state of shock, frozen by his inability to react to the very situation he had been hired to deal with.

"Take his gun . . . yuh can . . ."

The ex-priest shook his head in regret. He knew the wounded driver would not understand yet he could no more use a firearm than he could take the life of a feeble butterfly.

"Durned skunks!" the driver moaned and slumped forward, unconscious now.

Making the man comfortable, Caine climbed down from the stage's upper deck. Going to the passenger door he opened it. The women still verged on hysteria. Huddled together for safety. The sound of drumming hoof-beats sounded louder. The outlaws were desperately near.

"I am not an enemy," Caine said softly. "Please, come outside and take cover . . ."



"NO-O-O!" one woman shouted.

Caine shrugged, closed the door again. Master Po had been right. Especially where women were concerned. If he lived to be one thousand he would never fully get adjusted to female thinking.

Moving to his left, Caine dropped his bedroll behind some rocks and carefully gained elevation. He had scanned the terrain, knew instinctively how the outlaws would surround the stage . . .

Mark Bullard reined in, surveyed the stage. He didn't like the way the guard sat on the box with shotgun across his knee. The driver — slumped and bleeding — he discounted.

"We got 'em," hefty, scruffy Cole yelped.

"Yeah? You wanna risk chargin' into thet shotgun's muzzle?" Mark frowned, still uncertain.

"I'll pick him off," Nick the Greek whispered, his half shot-away throat unable to speak above the merest sighing.

"No!" Mark inched his horse forward — step by step, watching the guard suspiciously. When he got within ten yards he suddenly grinned. Waved his men forward.

Cole grunted. "He's chickened-out!"

"Yeah!" Mark rode right up to the stagecoach and yanked the frozen guard from his perch. It made him feel ten feet tall doing this. "Check the passengers," he ordered.

Up above, Caine readied himself for a leap. He did not want the women involved but . . .

Bullard swung from the saddle, gun in hand. Shielded by his horse.

Caine relaxed. The time was not yet ripe!

The outlaw snarled as he saw two women dragged from the stage. He had expected . . . But wait! Impatience gnawing at his innards he vaulted onto the box and yanked the payload from its under-seat safety. Cocking his sixgun he blasted the padlock and threw back the lid.

Cole burst out laughing, frenzied almost.

Nick the Greek tried to yell and couldn't.

Small, lean and vicious Trace Kenshalla didn't have any difficulty. He whooped. "We got it!" and dived in, scooping up handfuls as he slobbered over the fifty thousand dollars meant for the Danville bank.

A bullet kicked dirt from behind Trace's heel. Mark glowered. "Yuh ain't entitled to thet yet," he snapped.

Caine smiled grimly above the tableau. This was what he had been waiting for and . . .

Every Shaolin priest could claim to be a master of kung-fu, that most ancient of Chinese martial arts. Caine had more than once proved his proficiency in every degree of the sporting-defence as taught by the blind master, Po. Sporting? Not really . . .

Caine landed and became an instant exponent



of perpetual motion. Arms, legs, hands and feet all co-ordinated to such a degree that no part of him moved without being perfectly in harmony with another. Spear-hands stabbing he jabbed into throats and ribs; chopping like whirlwinds on a rampage at noses and necks and temples.

Fists like clubs pounded the opposition into pathetic pulp.

Caine chopped one man across the throat, jabbed into the stomach of another, power kicked a third in the spine. Covered ground at such a speed that the four gunshots sounding as one all missed by a proverbial mile.

Bullard slammed back against the stage, gasping for air. Gun flying in an arc from his weak hand. Eyes bulging. Lungs tortured.

Grabbing the frightened guard, Caine flung the man to the ground. Watching the owlhoots, he helped the injured driver from the box. Got him down and laid him gently on the rocky earth.

The guard showed signs of recovery. His fingers clawed for his sixgun.

Nick the Greek swung his Winchester, spurred his horse and came in bent over the saddle-horn. Caine saw him and exploded into action. . . Like a lightning bolt he took off, twisting in mid-air. Feet

smashing against the Greek's chest. Sending the other flying out of his saddle. Winchester spinning into the dust.

One of the women passengers screamed, flung open the stagecoach door. Skirts flopping, she stumbled from the vehicle. Fell into the path of the Greek's mount.

Caine's feet hit the dirt, levered him into the air a second time. Like an arrow he soared straight at the animal, landing in the saddle and instantly using his knees to turn the beast from its path. Looking down, he saw the woman crawling from danger by mere inches as he and horse swerved by.

Bullard staggered away from the stage, fighting down a sickness. "Into the rocks," he roared. He bent, scooped a gun into an angry hand.

When Caine vaulted from the frightened horse he had gone past the stagecoach. A bullet screamed over his head and he ducked. It was far from over yet. The greed did not interest him. Nor did he even want to know about the men pitting their strength and firepower against the hapless members of the stagecoach party. Uppermost in his mind was a memory. Master Po . . . a choice . . . and the right to defend those unable to defend themselves.



Mark Bullard sensed victory within his grasp. He got to his feet, rested his arm on a boulder. Sixgun aimed at the woman who still lay on the ground. "If'n yuh want to save her hide come here . . ." he called.

Caine walked straight, tall, unemotional. He did not raise his hands in cowboy fashion. He couldn't crawl in ways this outlaw would recognise.

"Closer, where I can see yuh!" Bullard ordered.

Shaolin teaching came to Caine's rescue. Much as he desired to rush the other he refrained. He possessed *Chi*, the inner strength. Outwardly he appeared docile, meek. At bay.

The woman moaned, lifted her head. Her eyes accused. Blaming Caine for her plight.

"You're a fighter, that I'll grant," Bullard allowed. The sixgun swung now to centre on Caine. His thumb crooked on the hammer, started to cock it.

The Chinese-American kept advancing until he was within striking distance. He judged Bullard's reaction time to the split-second. Then . . .

"Kill him!" the woman screamed. "Kill him!"

Bullard hesitated, frowning.

Caine gauged the intervening space.

"Kill him!" the woman yelled again.

Caine could not know she was speaking to the shotgun guard, on his knees now. He thought the distraught female wanted Bullard to kill *him*.

The outlaw's gun moved a fraction, hammer finally cocked. Finger whitening on the trigger.

Caine kicked, weight on his grounded foot. Swinging as the slashing toes — hard as steel — smashed Bullard's elbow. At that moment, gunfire crackled and one of the remaining owlhoots in the rocks toppled. Caine noticed the guard, the smoking Colt in his fist.

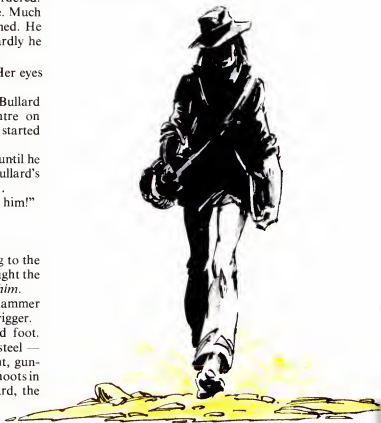
Hands over her face, the woman knelt in a position of prayer. Above her the pale, strained features of her companion watching from the stagecoach.

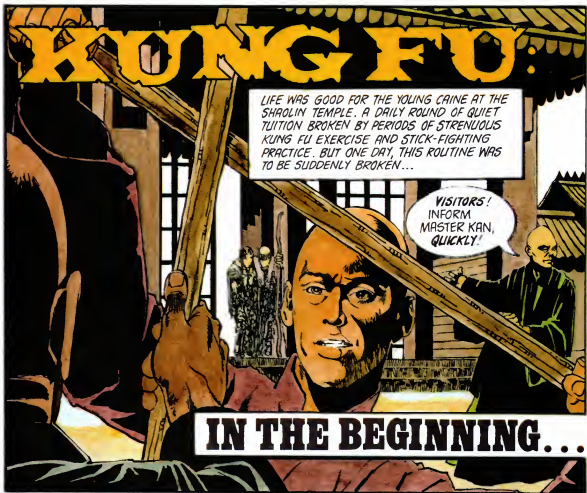
Slowly, not trying to sneak away, Caine walked from the scene of carnage. They didn't need him. Bullard would not be in any position to make more trouble and with the guard's recovery the other outlaws would find themselves more than matched in gunplay.

As he retrieved his bedroll the lanky young man smiled to himself. Remembering Master Po's words on an occasion of some importance in his development . . .

"Grasshopper, the day will come when you find yourself answering questions about people before there is a query. Always think of men and women as extensions of yourself. The right or left hand wondering what messages are being sent to their component parts. People are responsible not to the community but to their own particular fears and prejudices. Try shaking hands with them to encourage understanding and tolerance."

Caine knew what Po had meant. Not actual physical contact but leaving a bit of self in each mind one brushed against. He hoped his passing had, in a small measure, done something for those he had rescued. And those he had defeated.





KUNG FU:

LIFE WAS GOOD FOR THE YOUNG CAINE AT THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE. A DAILY ROUND OF QUIET TUITION BROKEN BY PERIODS OF STRENUOUS KUNG FU EXERCISE AND STICK-FIGHTING PRACTICE. BUT ONE DAY, THIS ROUTINE WAS TO BE SUDDENLY BROKEN...

VISITORS!
INFORM
MASTER KAN,
QUICKLY!

IN THE BEGINNING...

BLIND MASTER PO CALLED A HALT TO THE PRACTICE...

VISITORS, EH,
GRASSHOPPER? WHO
HONOURS US?

AN OLD
MONK, MASTER,
AND HE LOOKS
SICK! HIS DISCIPLE
CAN HARDLY
SUPPORT HIM!

AS CAINE WATCHED,
MASTER KAN
GREETED HIS OLD
FRIEND FROM THE
FUKIEN TEMPLE...

MASTER
SUN! I DIDN'T
EXPECT...

BUT YOU'RE
ILL! COME WITH
ME!

A ROOM WAS QUICKLY FOUND FOR THE AGEING MONK...



THEN IT WAS TIME FOR MASTER SUN TO MOVE ON TO ANOTHER LIFE...



CHAO WAS OBVIOUSLY AN ACCOMPLISHED FIGHTER...



BUT TO HIM, VICTORY WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PRACTICE...





MORE IMPORTANT,
TOO, THAN FAIR
PLAY...

BUT AS CHAO MOVED IN FOR
THE FINAL STROKE...



ENOUGH,
DISCIPLE
CHAO!
ENOUGH!

WHA...?



SO YOU ATTACK
THE DEFENCELESS,
DISCIPLE CHAO? PERHAPS
YOU WOULD ALSO FIGHT
A BLIND MAN?
TRY ME!

CHAO HESITATED FOR A
MOMENT, BUT THEN...



IF THAT'S
WHAT HE WANTS!
THE OLD FOOL'S JUST
STANDING THERE! I'LL
HIT HIM BEFORE HE
KNOWS WHAT'S
HAPPENED!



ALMOST SILENTLY,
CHAO MOVED TO
THE ATTACK...

NOW!
THERE'S NO
WAY HE CAN
STOP ME.

BUT, FAST AS
LIGHTNING...

SURPRISED, CHAO HAD NO
DEFENCE AGAINST THE BLOW
WHICH FOLLOWED...



LUUH!

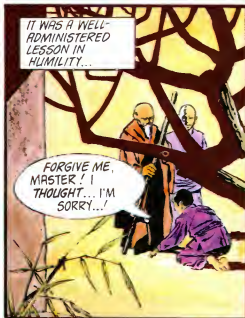
IT WAS OVER
IN SECONDS...

BEWARE OF
YOUR OWN STRENGTH,
CHAO! THE EAGLE
CARRYING A SNAKE IN ITS
CLAWS SOMETIMES
FINDS ITSELF
BITTEN!



IT WAS A WELL-
ADMINISTERED
LESSON IN
HUMILITY...

FORGIVE ME,
MASTER! I
THOUGHT... I'M
SORRY...!




CAINE, TOO, HAD LEARNED FROM THE
LESSON. HE OFFERED HIS HAND IN
FRIENDSHIP...




SO TWO THREADS OF FATE WERE DRAWN
TOGETHER. IN LATER YEARS, CAINE
WOULD REALISE WHAT THE
CONSEQUENCES WERE TO BE.

KUNG FU



FOR CAINE, THE YEARS PASSED ALL TOO QUICKLY AS HE GREW TO MANHOOD IN THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE. HE WAS MORE THAN CONTENT WITH LIFE: THE TRAINING IN KUNG FU BALANCED BY PERIODS OF QUIET MEDITATION...

THE WORM IN THE APPLE



BUT CHAO WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT SO SATISFIED. CAINE THOUGHT HE WOULD TRY TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM...

NOW
IS THE TIME
TO TALK, WHEN
ALL IS QUIET.

BUT...



HE'S
NOT HERE!
BUT WHERE CAN
HE HAVE GOT
TO?

CAINE SAT DOWN TO WAIT FOR HIS FRIEND'S RETURN, AND AS HE DID SO...

WHAT IS THIS? SOMETHING HIDDEN AMONGST THE BED-CLOTHES.

CURIOUS, CAINE EXAMINED THE BUNDLE, AND TO HIS HORROR...

MEAT AND WINE! HE MUST KNOW THAT THESE THINGS ARE FORBIDDEN TO MONKS.

DEEPLY TROUBLED, CAINE MOVED OUT INTO THE COOL NIGHT TO THINK...

WHAT SHOULD I DO? WAIT! SOMEONE IS THERE ... LIP ON THE WALL!

CAINE RAN FORWARD TO CHALLENGE THE INTRUDER, BUT THEN...

CHAO! IT IS YOU. IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LEAVE THE MONASTERY!

CAINE!

SO YOU'VE FOUND OUT! NOW YOU'LL DISGRACE ME BY TELLING KAN.

I DO NOT KNOW!

BEFORE CAINE COULD
MAKE ANY DECISION,
CHAO TOOK THE
INITIATIVE...



WAIT!
DO NOT...!

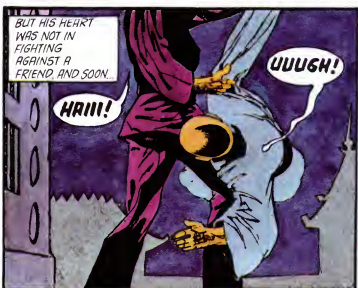
YAAAAH!

AS THE BUNDLE FLEW AWAY OUT OF
SIGHT, CAINE BEGAN TO DEFEND
HIMSELF...



STOP THIS!
WE CAN TALK
IT OVER.

BUT HIS HEART
WAS NOT IN
FIGHTING
AGAINST A
FRIEND AND SOON...



UUUGH!

HRIII!

BUT THE NOISE OF THEIR
FIGHTING COULD NOT GO UN-
NOTICED FOR LONG, AND..



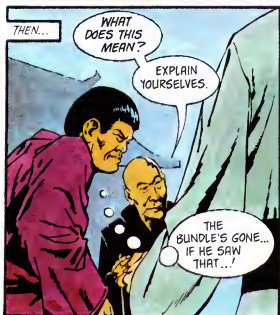
CAINE!
CHAO! STOP
THIS NOW!

OOOF!

THEN...

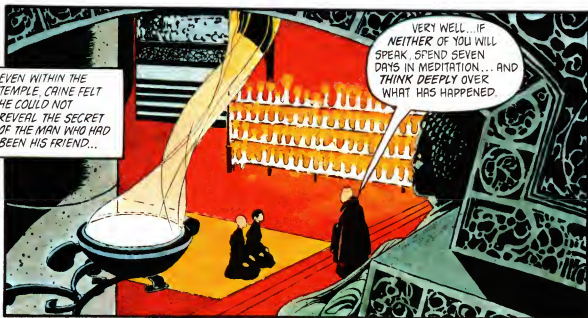
WHAT
DOES THIS
MEAN?

EXPLAIN
YOURSELVES.



THE
BUNDLE'S GONE...
IF HE SAW
THAT...!

EVEN WITHIN THE TEMPLE, CAINE FELT HE COULD NOT REVEAL THE SECRET OF THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN HIS FRIEND...



VERY WELL...IF NEITHER OF YOU WILL SPEAK, SPEND SEVEN DAYS IN MEDITATION... AND THINK DEEPLY OVER WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

BUT WHEN NORMAL LIFE RESUMED, CHAO SHOWED NO SIGN OF GRATITUDE...



EVEN NOW HE HAS NOT REFORMED! PERHAPS, WITH TIME, I CAN PERSUADE HIM...?

BUT CAINE WAS TO HAVE NO TIME, FOR SOON...



YOU REMEMBER THE PEBBLES YOU TRIED TO SNATCH FROM MY HAND WHEN FIRST YOU ARRIVED, CAINE? NOW TRY AGAIN

WITH THE SPEED OF A STRIKING COBRA, CAINE'S HAND MOVED FORWARD, AND...



THIS TIME, MASTER KAN FOUND HIS HAND EMPTY...



NOW IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE US.

KUNG FU: THE RISING STORM




STOP HIM!
HIS HIGHNESS
IS DEAD! STOP
HIM!

TIME PASSED SWIFTLY
OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE THEN,
SUDDENLY, CAINE'S WORLD FELL APART.
WITH MASTER PO SLAIN BY THE ARROGANT
NEPHEW OF THE EMPEROR, CAINE HAD
TAKEN VENGEANCE. NOW THERE WAS
NOTHING LEFT TO DO BUT FLEE...



WITH THE GUILF OF A
SHAOLIN PRIEST, CAINE
MANAGED TO EVADE HIS
PURSUERS, BUT...

I MUST RETURN
TO THE TEMPLE! TELL
MASTER KAN WHAT
HAS HAPPENED. THEY
WILL ALL BE IN
DANGER NOW.



BUT IT WAS A LONG
WAY BACK TO
SHAOLIN... AND
TROOPS WERE
SEARCHING FOR
CAINE EVERYWHERE.

FINALLY, A FEW MILES
FROM THE TEMPLE...

SOLDIERS...
CLOSING IN ON THE
TEMPLE ALREADY! I
MUST GET THROUGH
AND WARN
THEM.

BUT, AS HE DREW
EVEN CLOSER...

A GUARD...

AND
YET, I MUST
PASS THROUGH
THIS WAY.

SILENTLY, STEALTHILY,
CAINE MADE HIS MOVE...

UUUH!

AT LAST, CAINE
REACHED SAFETY...

CAINE! WHAT ARE
YOU DOING BACK
HERE?

MASTER KAN SWIFTLY
APPEARED...

CAINE!
WHAT HAS
HAPPENED?

MASTER!
I HAVE BROUGHT
GREAT TROUBLE TO
THE TEMPLE! MASTER
PO IS DEAD.

CAINE QUICKLY
BLURTED OUT
HIS STORY...

...THE
SOLDIERS ARE
ALREADY HERE! I HAD
BETTER LEAVE, OR I WILL
ONLY MAKE THINGS
WORSE!

NO... STAY!
IF FATE HAS BROUGHT
THINGS TO THIS, IT IS
BETTER WE FACE IT
TOGETHER!

BUT SOME THINGS HAD NOT CHANGED AT THE
TEMPLE, AND CHAO WAS ONE OF THEM...

SEND HIM
AWAY! HE'LL
BRING DEATH TO
ALL OF US!

NO! WE
NEVER TURN OUR
BACKS ON THOSE IN
NEED! CAINE STAYS.

NOTHING
HAPPENED
BEFORE NIGHT-
FALL, THEN...

WE'LL ALL WIND
UP DEAD, UNLESS...
THE ONLY WAY TO
BUY MY LIFE IS
WITH CAINE'S
HEAD!

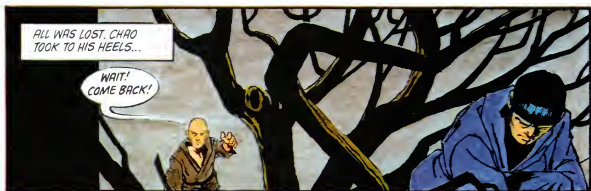
AND, SO...

IT'S YOU
OR ALL OF US,
CAINE!

TAKEN BY SURPRISE, CAINE
BARELY AVOIDED THE ATTACK...

CHAO!
HAVE YOU
GONE MAD!?





ALL WAS LOST. CHAO
TOOK TO HIS HEELS...

WAIT!
COME BACK!



CAINE NOW HAD NO
ALTERNATIVE BUT
TO REPORT TO
MASTER KAN...

IT IS THE
WAY OF HEAVEN...
THE MORNING WILL TELL
WHAT OUR DESTINY
WILL BE!



MEANWHILE, CHAO, ALWAYS IN
SEARCH OF THE WINNING SIDE,
HAD MADE HIS WAY OUTSIDE
THE WALLS

STAND
WHERE YOU
ARE!

WHAT DO
YOU WANT?

TAKE ME
TO THE GENERAL!
I HAVE IMPORT-
ANT NEWS!

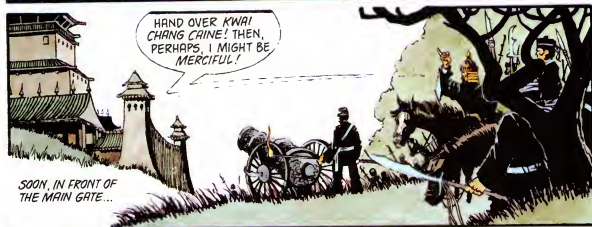


SOON, CHAO FOUND
HIMSELF IN THE
PRESENCE OF
GENERAL LIN...

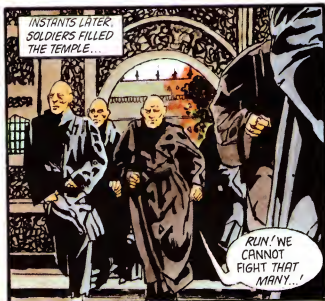
I
DARE NOT LIE!
THE MAN YOU
SEEK IS IN THE
TEMPLE!

SO! I'VE
LONG WANTED
TO SUPPRESS
SHAOLIN... NOW I HAVE
THE EXCUSE I NEED.
WE ATTACK AT DAWN!

AND, AT DAYBREAK...



THAT WAS ALL GENERAL LIN NEEDED TO HEAR. THE MIGHTY SIEGE GUN ROARED...





MANY MONKS ACCEPTED THEIR FATE AND SURRENDERED. OTHERS FOUGHT...

HYAAH!

AAARGH!



AS FIRES STARTED TO BREAK OUT, CAINE'S ONLY THOUGHT WAS TO PROTECT MASTER KAN...

COME WITH ME, CAINE! THIS WAY.

AYAAH!



MASTER KAN LED THE WAY TO A SMALL GATE, LEADING OUT OF THE TEMPLE...

YOUR DESTINY IS NOT YET DECIDED, CAINE! YOU MUST LEAVE... NOW!

BUT, MASTER! IF YOU STAY... THEN SO SHOULD I!

BUT KAN WOULD STAND NO ARGUMENT. CAINE FOUND HIMSELF GENTLY PUSHED OUTSIDE, AND THE GATE SWUNG CLOSED...



IT WAS THE LAST CAINE WAS TO SEE OF THE MONASTERY AND ITS MASTER...

A comic book panel depicting a scene of destruction. In the foreground, the profile of a bald monk with a shaved head is shown, looking towards the right. He has a somber expression. Behind him, a large, dark, jagged rock formation stands prominently. In the middle ground, a traditional East Asian temple with multiple roofs is engulfed in intense orange and yellow flames. Thick, dark black smoke billows upwards from the burning structure, filling a significant portion of the sky. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a pale, hazy sky. The overall color palette is dominated by the warm tones of the fire and the cool, muted tones of the landscape and the monk's skin.

FROM A NEARBY HILLSIDE, CAINE
COULD ONLY LOOK BACK IN
HORROR AT THE TEMPLE HE HAD
LOVED SO WELL, AS IT SLOWLY
BURNED TO THE GROUND...

THERE WAS NO WAY OF
KNOWING WHAT HAD
HAPPENED TO HIS FRIENDS
AND TEACHERS. THERE WAS
ONLY THE FUTURE, DARK
AND FOREBODING... AND
CAINE WOULD HAVE TO
FACE THAT ALONE...

CONTINUED ON
PAGE 49...

THE AMAZING CARRADINES...



David Carradine is one of the most well-known faces on television ... a superstar of the small screen. And if he's learned his acting well, it's hardly surprising, for not only is his father a famous actor, but virtually the whole family have taken up the same profession!

In most families, there is quite often only one person who makes an outstanding success of their life, if any of them do, while the others remain quietly in the background, shining by the reflected light of their successful relative. But in the amazing Carradine Clan, no one is content to let the others

do it for them. For the Carradines, father John and his sons David, Bruce, Keith, Robert and Christopher, life is about success ... and one way or another, they're all there, doing their darndest! Their attitudes and goals differ, of course, but achievement is the name of the game!

The whole family rarely manage to get together these days, as their various commitments take them to the four corners of the earth at various times. But generally they get along well ... although, as you can imagine, with everybody trying as hard as they do, differences do occur some-

times. Some of the arguments between David and his father have become legendary. For instance, they were once discussing their different approaches to the playing of a Shakespearean role, while standing by a pool table. . . and David ended up proving his point in shattering fashion: by hurling one of the pool balls through a window!

John Carradine, now approaching seventy years old, is something of a legend himself. He has a long career behind him, spanning forty years on the screen, which is not to mention his stage acting career before that. For some of his film roles he had to grow his hair, and David has described him as 'the first hippy. . . he had his hair way down his back in the Forties!' Strangely, John was born in Greenwich Village, New York, later to be one of the homes of the hippies. His first contact with the theatre was as a scenic artist, painting and designing the sets. From there, it wasn't long before he was taking a more active role, and actually 'treading the boards' himself.

John started off at the top, playing Shakespearean roles, which is where most other stage actors hope to end up. After a variety of parts, he found himself drawn inevitably into the movies, where he has been quite happy to develop his career ever since. His dramatic voice, height and striking features fitted him for a career as character actor, rather than a leading man, and has also meant appearances in several horror films. One of his earliest roles was in *Bride of Frankenstein*, made in 1935, and he even played Dracula in the forties, in *House of Frankenstein* and *House of Dracula*. And a taste for the terrifying has remained with him; he's become something of a cult figure amongst horror film fans alone.

But his screen career hasn't just been limited to horror films. He's covered just about every angle there is, from Westerns to pirate films, comedies or even the occasional mad surgeon. He was also in the biblical epic *The Ten Commandments*, and that gigantic movie, which had just about everybody in it, *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

More recently, John has been doing more television work, which has its own extra reward, as it gives him a chance to co-star with his fast-rising sons. Working with David in *Kung Fu*, he has played the blind preacher, Serenity Johnson, on more than one occasion. He has also guested with his youngest son, Robert, in his western series, *The Cowboys*. Even now, John Carradine finds himself very much in demand. . .

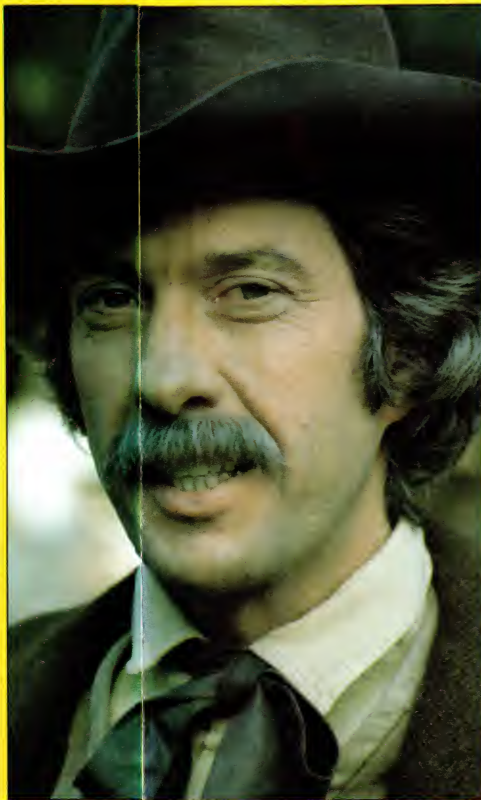
John's sons come from two marriages, both of which unfortunately ended in divorce. Bruce and David have the same mother, John's first wife, Ardanelle Abigail McCool, who lives in San Francisco. The mother of Keith, Robert and



DAVID & JOHN



ROBERT



BRUCE

Christopher is Sonia Henius, who lives in San Mateo.

Bruce is the oldest of the five-strong team, and he's not content with aiming for success in one field . . . he's trying two! Part of the time he's a successful builder in San Francisco, and part of the time he's an actor, either when he feels like it or, more often, when David and Robert have parts in their television shows that Bruce would obviously fit into well. He played the part of a sheriff in one of the **Kung Fu** episodes, and can obviously expect more roles in the future . . .

While the other Carradine sons have had their greatest successes in television, brother Keith has been carving out a healthy career in films. But he has also appeared in the **Kung Fu** series, although you may not have noticed him. In the sequences which show Caine growing up and being trained in kung fu in the Shaolin Temple, the boy is played by Radames Pera, and the man, of course, by David. But in between, where Caine is shown as a youth, that's Keith!

But it is in films that Keith is really making a name for himself, and of all the Carradine sons, he is the one who wanders furthest. Unlike television, which tends to shoot most of its footage either in the studio or at one or two nearby locations, movies go world-wide, and Keith goes wherever there are roles to be played. And this doesn't just mean travelling with American companies to film in foreign locations . . . he also makes French and Italian films as well.

Keith's film credits are already impressive. The famous Italian producer Carlo Ponti signed him to play the hero in the film **Run, run Joe**, which featured a multi-national cast. He was in **McCabe and Mrs. Miller**, and he got top-star status at the Cannes Film Festival when director Robert Altman entered their film **Thieves Like Us**. Keith has since worked again with Altman on **Nashville**, a film which has received considerable critical acclaim. So when it comes to following in their father's movie-making footsteps, Keith is way ahead of his brothers . . .

Of course, there's no reason why the others shouldn't catch up with him. Robert, especially, being the youngest of the five sons, has lots of time to rise to the heights. And he's already in there chasing. His debut was the sort of break that every young actor must dream of getting . . . playing with the legendary John Wayne in **The Cowboys**. When it was decided to make a television series based on the film, Robert was the obvious choice to re-create his role as Slim on the small screen.

It's hardly surprising that a part was found for Robert in **Kung Fu** as well, and he appeared with his father as Serenity Johnson's mute helper. Now that was a real family show!



JOHN

Like David, who has written and played the music for the films that he has made himself, Robert is also passionately interested in music, playing guitar, banjo and bass. But whereas David is pretty easygoing about the way his career turns out, Robert is very ambitious. He wants to surpass even his father, who specialised in character roles, by playing lead parts. And with ambitions like that, he could well turn out to be the biggest star in the family . . .

Faced with this vast array of acting talent in the other members of the family, it may come as something of a surprise to know that the fifth brother, Christopher, has **not** made any guest appearances in his brothers' series, nor does he have any particular intention of taking up acting at all. But he has inherited another of his father's talents . . . the same eye for design that started John Carradine's whole career. He's now an architect, and is doing very nicely at it; and Christopher has no plans to change his chosen career . . .

Our look at the Carradine clan wouldn't be complete without a mention of David's lady,

Barbara Seagull, even though their relationship has been a little tempestuous recently. They met in 1969, when they were both working on a fairly forgettable film, a Western called **Heaven With A Gun**, which didn't exactly make a great impression . . . although Barbara made an instant impression on David. She also appeared in **Kung Fu**, in a two-part story, in which she played a Shaolin nun! She's also made a film in Holland, called **Angela**, and appeared in the films that David produced and made himself, like **Around** and **You and Me**. More recently, she had a large part in a film called **Diamonds**, in which she played a nun again!

And as for their son, Free, he too has been getting in on the acting, even at his tender age. With his folks, he appeared in David's film **Around**, so he's already started along the road to stardom!

So, there you have the Carradines . . . probably one of the most concentrated collections of talent to be found in one family. One day, perhaps, they'll all get together to make a movie . . . the ultimate in family entertainment.

DAVID CARRADINE'S KUNG FU QUIZ

1. I have a young son. Do you know his name?

2. These days, kung fu is the name given to any style of Chinese fighting methods. But what does it really mean? A. To Kill, B. Hard work, C. Empty-handed fighting?



3. Bruce Lee was the greatest kung fu film star of them all. What was the title of his last completed film?



4. Can you name the two American stars who acted with Bruce in this film?

5. When Caine was a young disciple at the Shaolin Temple, he was given a nickname? What was it?



6. This is another well-known Chinese kung fu star. His name is ...?

7. In the **Kung Fu** T.V. series, when does Caine arrive in America? A. About 1840, B. About 1870, C. About 1900?

8. Here's a hard one for kung fu fans. Bruce Lee invented his own style of Kung fu, called **Jeet Kune Do**. What does this mean?

9. Before I got the part of Caine in **Kung Fu**, I played the hero in another Western television series. Can you tell me the title of this?

10. Where was Bruce Lee born? A. Hong Kong, B. Taiwan, C. San Francisco?

11. Name the odd one out of this series: White Crane, Black Bear, Praying Mantis, T'ai Chi, Monkey.



12. Bruce Lee also had a part in a television series before he became famous. What was the series, and what part did he play?

13. What is the name of the head of the Shaolin Temple, in the **Kung Fu** television series?

14. Bruce Lee was working on another film when he died, which he never finished. What was its title?

15. How many schools of kung fu are there? A. About 40, B. About 100, C. About 1000?

ANSWERS TO KUNG FU QUIZ

1. Free.
2. B. Hard Work.
3. "Enter the Dragon."
4. John Saxon, Jim Kelly.
5. Grasshopper.
6. Wang Yu.
7. B. About 1870.
8. "The Way of the Intercepting Fist."
9. Shane.
10. C. San Francisco.
11. Black Bear; the others are all names of kung fu styles.
12. The series was "The Green Hornet". Bruce Lee played Kato, the Green Hornet's chauffeur.
13. Master Kan.
14. "The Game of Death."
15. B. About 100.

SECRETS OF SHAOLIN KUNG FU



The destruction of the Shaolin temple was a disaster ... but fortunately not everything was lost. There were subsidiary temples teaching the same style of kung fu, and a few of the monks escaped from the original temple, to spread their teachings even further. As a result, the Shaolin style of kung fu has survived to the present, and is

still taught in various places amongst the overseas Chinese communities.

The history of Shaolin Kung Fu goes back to the sixth century, when an Indian Buddhist monk called Boddidharma arrived in China to begin teaching. Noticing his pupils becoming weak and undeveloped, he gave them a series of eighteen

exercises to do. It is from these exercises that Shaolin kung fu developed.

Later, in the thirteenth century, a priest called Chueh Yuan revised the eighteen exercises into 72 movements, and made the art into much more of a fighting style. Then, travelling round the country to try out his art and learn from other martial experts, he met two veteran fighters, Li Ch'eng and Pai Yu Feng. Together they developed things further, until they had 170 movements. These are the basis for today's Shaolin kung fu.

The 170 actions are divided into sections, known as the Five Animals Style. Each style imitated the movement and the spirit of the beast it was named after, and was also designed to develop one of the five 'essences': Spirit, bone, strength, sinew and **Ch'i**. **Ch'i** is hard to explain, for there is nothing like it in western forms of exercise or fighting. It's a sort of internal power or energy, which is independent of muscular strength. The Chinese believe that everyone has **Ch'i**... it's the power that enables a baby to cling onto things, much harder than its tiny muscles would allow... but in most people the power is never developed.

Dragon style aims at developing the spirit, and no strength is used. One tries to become like a dragon floating in the air, able to move instantly in any direction, and the exercise develops flexibility and grace of movement.

Tiger Style is for strengthening the bones, and some of the actions resemble the leaping of the tiger, or the crouching attitude it takes up before springing. Hand movements are claw-like.

Leopard style is for developing strength, and is full of power. Though the tiger is a large, impressive animal, the leopard is more powerful, and capable of larger leaps. Because of this, the exercise develops the legs and abdomen especially.

Crane style is for strengthening the sinews. The Crane is a good example of this, for its long legs are little more than sinew and bone, with very little muscular development. The exercises also stress balance and quick foot-movements. The arms are moved like the wings of a crane, and balance is developed for fighting on one leg as well as two.

Finally, **Snake style** cultivates the **Ch'i**. Though the snake is usually supple or soft-looking, it can draw instant strength when it needs to encircle its prey. This exercise develops the body to be soft yet strong, flexible but firm. The fingers are used like the snake's tongue, and with the same flashing speed, for hitting vital areas and nerve points.

These exercises are performed in sequence, through the whole series, and, with each one developing a different aspect, provide a complete system of training for the practitioner's body and skills. The movements also have their fighting applications, of course, including blocks and



parries, offensive blows and kicks. This, then, is the basis of Shaolin kung fu.

Apart from these exercises, there is a considerable amount of emphasis on more passive techniques, such as meditation. This was especially true in the temples, where the idea was to produce good Buddhists, as well as fighters. But meditation also assists the pure fighting man as well. A fighter who gives way to anger leaves himself open to all kinds of attacks and counterattacks, and it is important to stay calm and in full command of oneself at all times. Ultimately, of course, the martial artist should develop such self-control that he does not ever have to fight at all. Apart from its deeper, religious aspects, meditation develops calmness and self-knowledge. Linked with this, there are also breathing exercises which help to develop the **Chi**.

There are other, more specialised exercises too, though these are not taught so much in the west as they were in China, where trainees were prepared to spend many years working on nothing but kung fu. One was to develop strong fingers and an iron grip. The trainee would be given two large, earthenware jars, with narrow necks, which he could just pick up by grasping the lip from above with his finger-tips. The trainee would then walk a mile or two carrying the jars. After a few weeks, a bowl of water was put in each jar, and they would be carried. Then, later, more water would be added, until eventually he would be carrying forty or fifty pounds in each hand . . .

Another technique, which has become quite well known to audiences of martial arts 'shows' is known as the 'Iron palm', and is used for breaking bricks, lumps of ice, and so on. This can also take months or even years to develop, and consists of hardening the hand and developing great penetrating power.

First, the hands are thrust into a bucket of dry sand, over and over again, until the trainee can force his hands into it up to his wrists. Then, things are made more difficult by using wet sand, and after that he moves on to dry rice grains, and finally onto such as ball bearings or even stones.

This technique should never be tried without supervision, for it can be extremely dangerous. Without certain Chinese linaments which are rubbed into the skin along with training, blood clots can form in the hands, which can lead to disability or even death. Even when properly supervised, the end result is extremely ugly, the hands being covered with hard, calloused skin, and the fingers sometimes becoming deformed. Hardly surprisingly, in the modern world there is not much demand for iron palm training!

There were other methods for developing the fighter's skill in fighting in awkward situations.



Wooden stakes, perhaps thirty or forty, would be driven into an area of ground, the stakes being a few inches or a couple of feet apart. The stakes could be two or three feet high, and a few inches in diameter. The trainee would then practise his movements, and later actual sparring, standing on top of the stakes, moving around from one to another developing his balance and his sure-footedness. The stakes would be made taller and further apart as the trainee grew in skill.

Learning to fight blindfolded enabled the practitioner to defend himself at dead of night. But there are tales of other skills which verge on the incredible, such as being able to climb sheer walls, or leap fifteen feet in the air. Though these tales could well be exaggerations, there certainly were forms of training which allowed some progress in



these directions ... but many of these methods have been lost in the course of time ...

Finally, there was training with weapons. Most styles of kung fu have some form of weapons training, but this is usually only taught to advanced students. The first thing to do is master one's own body and movements, before going on to weapons techniques, which are an extension of unarmed methods. Like unarmed styles, the purpose of learning weapons is not to be able to fight ... it is a further development of the whole man.

parrying and blocking. The long spear was also especially favoured, for, properly used, it made it virtually impossible for an attacker to get 'inside' its length and counter attack.

Another favourite weapon was the **kuan do**, a halberd-like weapon, with a broad, heavy, curved blade mounted on a pole. This was swung in flowing, circular movements, forming a defensive 'screen' about the practitioner's body, which was very difficult to penetrate.

Amongst the shorter weapons, the sword was the favourite, and there were several varieties.



Among the northern styles of Shaolin kung fu, long weapons, such as the spear, were concentrated on, for the plains and rolling grasslands of north China allowed plenty of room for manoeuvre. In the south, where the crowded life of the cities cut down on space, shorter weapons such as the sword and knife were favoured.

Fans of the **Kung fu** television series will have seen fighting with the staff being practised. One of the main things about staff-techniques is to use it as both a short and long weapon ... using its length for thrusting attacks, and, by holding it with both hands, using it short for defensive

Again, as with so much Chinese weaponry, the style of fighting tended to be circular, the sword moving in curves and arcs, rather than the more straight-line style of western fencing. Swords were also used in pairs, allowing simultaneous defence and attack with either hand. Knives, of which there were also a great variety, tended to be used in much the same style as the sword.

All in all, then, the fully-trained Shaolin martial artist had a formidable array of skills, from unarmed combat to mastery of many kinds of weapons. So formidable was he, in fact, that once recognised, he would rarely have to fight ... which, finally, is the way it should be ...

KUNG FU

HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF HISTORY HAD COME TO AN END... THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE LAY IN RUINS. AND YET, NOT ALL HAD BEEN CAPTURED OR KILLED...

THE AFTERMATH



BUT CHAO'S GRUDGE AGAINST CAINE WAS STILL NOT SATISFIED...



GIVE ME
SOME MEN,
GENERAL! I
KNOW THE WAY
HE'LL THINK...
WHERE HE'LL
GO!

GOOD!
FIND HIM,
AND YOU'LL
BE WELL
REWARDED.

CAINE, MEANWHILE, HAD
DECIDED TO LIE LOW
UNTIL NIGHTFALL...



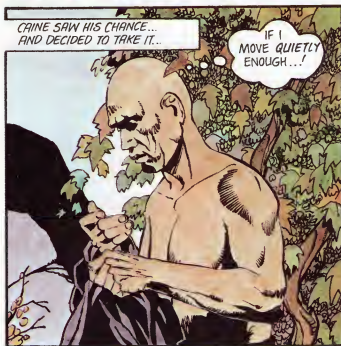
THEY SAY A SHAOLIN
PRIEST CAN WALK
THROUGH WALLS. HOW
ARE WE SUPPOSED TO
FIND ONE MAN IN ALL
THIS WILDERNESS?

BUT, LATER, SOMETHING
HAPPENED THAT MADE
CAINE CHANGE HIS PLANS...



THEY SAY WE'LL
BE WITHDRAWN IN
AN HOUR OR SO...GOING
STRAIGHT BACK
TO CAMP.

CAINE SAW HIS CHANCE...
AND DECIDED TO TAKE IT...



IF I
MOVE QUIETLY
ENOUGH...

SILENT AND SWIFT
AS A STRIKING SNAKE,
CAINE ATTACKED!



THE SOLDIER WOULD SLEEP
FOR SEVERAL HOURS, WITH
LUCK THAT WOULD GIVE
CAINE TIME TO GET CLEAR...

NOT
A BAD FIT!
IT WILL DO!

CAINE HASTENED TO JOIN
THE REST OF THE PARTY...

THEY HAVE NOT
SEEN ME! NOW,
IF NONE OF THESE
MEN ARE HIS
FRIENDS...

BUT THEN, THE
UNEXPECTED
HAPPENED...

WE'LL
STOP HERE
AND REST.

THE LEADER OF THE SOLDIERS
TURNED AND GAZED AT HIS MEN...

KWAI
CHANG CAINE!
I KNEW YOU'D
FALL INTO MY
TRAP IF I PLAYED
IT RIGHT!

CHAO!
YOU...YOU HAVE
JOINED UP
WITH THEM!

BUT BEFORE CAINE COULD MAKE A
MOVE, THE TRAP SPRANG SHUT!

WE'VE
GOT HIM! DON'T
LET HIM GET
AWAY!



CAINE KNEW THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO ESCAPE... TO FIGHT!

HAAA!!

UUUGH!



BUT IT TOOK CAINE ALL HIS SKILL TO AVOID THE FLASHING SWORD-STROKES...

HUUH?!



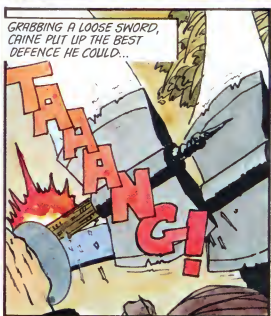
CHAO HAD PLANNED FOR EVERYTHING...

KEEP HIM WHERE HE IS.
THEN LEAVE HIM TO ME!



THE AXES WHIRLED WITH HEAD-SPLITTING SPEED...

STAND AND DIE, CAINE!
THERE'S NO WAY OUT!



GRABBING A LOOSE SWORD, CAINE PUT UP THE BEST DEFENCE HE COULD...

TAAANG!



ONLY ONE AVENUE OF
ESCAPE WAS LEFT...

HE'S DIVED
OVER!



CAINE HIT
THE WATER...

HARD!

ON THE
CLIFF TOP...

HE MUST
BE DEAD! NO
ONE COULD
SURVIVE
THAT.

CAINE WILL!
HE'S GOT THE
LUCK OF A DEVIL!
SEND MEN DOWN
TO SEARCH.


BUT BY THE TIME THE MEN
COULD ARRIVE, CAINE
WOULD BE WELL CLEAR.

FOR A WHILE AT LEAST,
HE HAD SOME
BREATHING SPACE...




KUNG FU

THE HAUNTED TEMPLE



SEVERAL DAYS PASSED AS CAINE DODGED PATROLS AND MADE HIS WAY CLEAR. HE HAD MANAGED TO BEG A FEW MEAGRE SUPPLIES, BUT NOW A SAFE RESTING PLACE WAS THE MAIN THING ON HIS MIND...

FRIENDS!
I'M LOOKING FOR A
PLACE TO STAY! THAT
TEMPLE AHEAD... IS
IT OCCUPIED?



IT'S OCCUPIED ALL
RIGHT! THE PLACE IS
HAUNTED BY A
HORRIBLE DEMON!

TURN BACK!
FIND SOMEWHERE
ELSE TO SLEEP...
ANYWHERE BUT
THERE!

BUT CAINE WAS IN NO
MOOD TO TURN BACK...

WE'LL TELL
THE COFFIN-
MAKER TO SEND
FOR YOUR BODY.

LET
THEM THINK
WHAT THEY
WILL. I'VE NO
FEAR OF
DEMONS!



EASY TO
SEE HOW THIS
PLACE GOT ITS
REPUTATION!

BUT IF
IT IS SUPPOSED
TO BE HAUNTED,
NO ONE WILL SEARCH
FOR ME HERE!

CAINE SOON ARRIVED
AT THE DARK
RUINED TEMPLE...



THE TEMPLE WAS AS DISMAL
WITHIN AS WITHOUT...

IT WILL
DO! FIRST
SOMETHING
TO EAT.

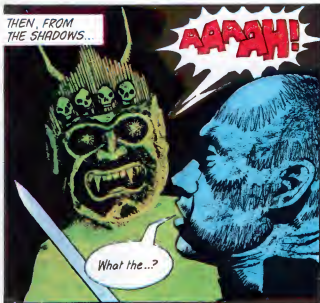


AFTERWARDS, CAINE
ENTERED INTO
MEDITATION... BUT
SOON

OOOOOOHHH!



THE DEMON?
BUT THERE
ARE NO
SUCH...!



THEN, FROM
THE SHADOWS...

AAAAH!

What the...?

CAINE SPRANG BACKWARDS
IN ASTONISHMENT...



WHEN CAINE SHOWED NO SIGN
OF RUNNING, THE DEMON
MOVED FORWARD TO ATTACK...



STRANGE! THIS
DEMON SEEMS
SOLID ENOUGH!
PERHAPS..!

AND THE SWORD
WAS CERTAINLY
SHARP ENOUGH!



THE "DEMON'S"
CRY OF PAIN
WAS DISTINCTLY
HUMAN!



UUUGH!

AAH!!!

CAINE FINISHED
IT OFF QUICKLY...



CAINE DASHED FORWARD AND...



IT WAS A STAND-OFF. NEITHER COULD TURN THE OTHER OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES WITHOUT GIVING HIMSELF AWAY...

LISTEN, IN SPITE OF WHAT I DO, I THINK YOU PRIESTS ARE ALL RIGHT! I CAN HELP YOU!

I NEED TO GET TO THE COAST... GET A SHIP!



KUNG FU

THE END OF THE GAME

MAKE
WAY FOR HIS
EXCELLENCY
CHAO! CLEAR
THE ROAD!

FUKIEN
PROVINCE, SOUTH
EAST CHINA. A DETACHMENT
OF SOLDIERS ESCORT A NEW
OFFICIAL ON HIS WAY...

TWO TRAVELLERS STAYED
ESPECIALLY CLEAR...

AS THE SOLDIERS
PASSED...

SOLDIERS
AND OFFICIALS!
BAH! WHY CAN'T
THEY LEAVE US
ALONE?

COULD
IT REALLY BE
HIM? HERE TO
HAUNT ME
STILL?

FURTHER DOWN
THE SAME ROAD...

IT
MUST BE HIM!
HE HAS SET UP
ROADBLOCKS TO
STOP ME
REACHING
THE COAST.

LOOKS LIKE
WE'LL HAVE TO
TAKE TO THE
COUNTRY!

BUT AS THEY
MOVED AWAY...

TWO MEN!
TRYING TO
AVOID US!

RUN
FOR IT!

STOP THEM!

CRANE AND WEI HAD TOO
MUCH OF A START...

THEY'VE
GIVEN UP!

WE CAN
SLOW DOWN.

EVEN SO,
THEY WILL BE
DOUBLY ALERT
NOW!

WE
MAY HAVE
TO THINK
AGAIN!

THE SUN WAS SINKING BY
THE TIME THEY FOUND A
SAFE PLACE TO STOP...

I'LL GO
INTO TOWN AT DAWN
AND CHECK WHAT'S
HAPPENING! YOU
STAY HERE...

I WILL
STAY TILL
NIGHTFALL... IF
YOU ARE NOT
BACK THEN,

I WILL
MOVE ON.

MEANWHILE,
IN TOWN...

EXCELLENCY
CHAO! TWO MEN
APPROACHED THE
BARRIER... THEN
RAN OFF!

WHAT?
WHY DIDN'T
YOU STOP
THEM?

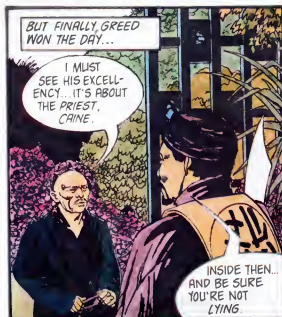
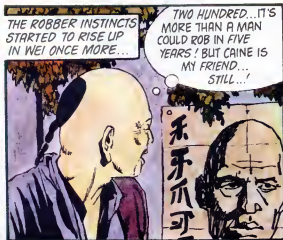
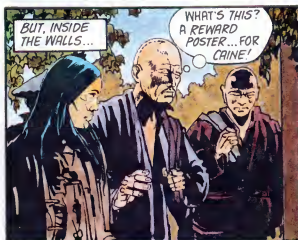
THE WRETCHED SOLDIER
COULD ONLY MAKE EXCUSES.
CHAO SENT HIM AWAY TO
BE BEATEN...

IT IS
CAINE...IT
HAS TO BE!

DOUBLE
THE GUARDS!
OFFER A
REWARD OF TWO
HUNDRED GOLD
PIECES.

NEXT MORNING, WEI
MOVED DOWN TO
THE TOWN...

GUARDS... BUT
THEY WON'T WORRY
ME... I'M NOT
KNOWN HERE.



AND SO, WHEN
WEI RETURNED...

THEY
WERE LOOKING
FOR YOU... BUT THEY
THINK YOU'VE RUN OFF
AFTER YESTERDAY!

GOOD!

WE'LL
GO INTO
TOWN EARLY,
WHEN THE
GUARDS ARE
STILL
SLEEPY!

UNSUSPECTING, CAINE
FOLLOWED HIS FRIEND
TO TOWN, AND...

GO ON!
WE'RE LOOKING
FOR PRIESTS,
NOT PEASANTS!

SILENTLY, WEI
DROPPED A
PIECE OF CLOTH...

THE
SIGNAL!

IT'S HIM.

AS THEY MOVED ON...

WE'LL GO
ALONG THE WALL...
IT TAKES US
NEAR THE AMERICAN
CONCESSION
AREA.

GOOD! THAT'S
LIKE AN EMBASSY!
THEY CANNOT TOUCH ME
ONCE I AM THERE.

BUT AS CAINE
REACHED THE TOP...

I'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU, CAINE!
THERE'S NO ESCAPE
FROM HERE!

CHAO!

MORE SOLDIERS CAME UP
BEHIND. CAINE REALISED
HE HAD BEEN BETRAYED...
BUT...

REWARD? YOU'VE
BEEN COLLABORATING
WITH THIS PRIEST! TAKE
HIM AWAY AND LOCK
HIM UP!

EXCELLENCY!
HERE HE IS...NOW,
MY REWARD!

WEI HAD FOUND ONE EVEN MORE TREACHEROUS
THAN HIMSELF. AS HE WAS TAKEN AWAY...

I'VE ALWAYS
HATED YOU, CAINE!
EVER SINCE YOU SET THE
BLIND MAN ON ME, THAT
VERY FIRST DAY! NOW IT'S
JUST YOU AND ME...AND
YOU'RE GOING TO DIE!



DESPERATELY, CAINE
FOUGHT FOR HIS LIFE...

NO
USE, CAINE! YOU
CAN'T DODGE
FOREVER.

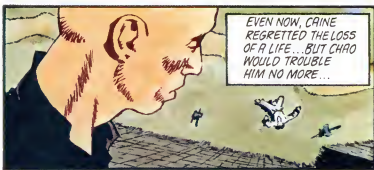
CAINE GOT IN A LUCKY KICK...



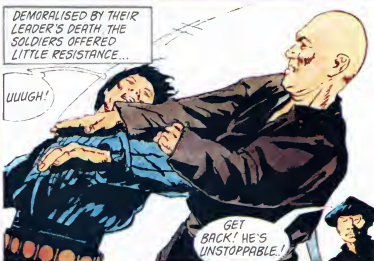


SWUNG ROUND BY THE FORCE OF THE KICK, CHAO FOUND THE PARAPET FAR TOO NARROW...

WHA... NOOOO!



EVEN NOW, CAINE REGRETTED THE LOSS OF A LIFE... BUT CHAO WOULD TROUBLE HIM NO MORE...



DEMORALISED BY THEIR LEADER'S DEATH, THE SOLDIERS OFFERED LITTLE RESISTANCE...

UUUGH!

GET BACK! HE'S UNSTOPPABLE!



CAINE DASHED ALONG THE WALL, UNTIL...

HE'S GETTING AWAY!

LET HIM GO... I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM!



THEN...



WHAT THE...?

AND IN THE AMERICAN CONCESSION AREA, A MARINE SUDDENLY GOT THE SURPRISE OF HIS LIFE...



CAINE EXPLAINED...

MY FATHER WAS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN. NOW I NEED HELP TO GET TO THE UNITED STATES!

CAINE WAS ON HIS WAY OUT OF CHINA... ON HIS WAY TO A NEW START IN A STRANGE LAND.

THE END.

Endeavour '73

KUNG FU

Helping Hand



Kwai Chang Caine walked the dusty trail, bedroll over his shoulder. Bare feet kicking up small plumes of dirt. Eyes narrowed into slits against a viciously bright sun hanging low on the horizon. He was thinking about the past. Strictly speaking, about blind Master Po. The old man was never far from his conscious mind.

A noise up ahead caught his attention and he shaded his eyes with a raised hand, peered across scrub and desert rock. A man lay on the ground, writhing in agony.

Caine ran forward, reached the other. One glance was enough. The dead rattler spoke volumes. A discarded sheath-knife and the slit trouser leg revealing the pronged punctures in the hastily swelling limb told a more deadly story.

"Durned thing got me unawares," the man moaned, hands clasped tight round his leg to stop the poison from going through his system.

"How long ago did this happen?" Caine asked, bending over the bounded leg.

"Ten... mebbe fifteen minutes!" the man replied.

Whipping the other's belt off, Caine made a tourniquet at the highest point of the thigh and used the stranger's sixgun to apply pressure to the arteries. "Hold that," he ordered.

The lowering sun glinted on a badge. A Texas Ranger star. Watching the Chinese-American retrieve his knife the lawman shuddered slightly.

"You know about snake bites?"

Caine nodded. Words were unnecessary at this precise moment. He could tell from the inflammation how serious the Ranger's condition was. The venom had moved—fast. From exertion, probably. Cutting into the flesh, Caine worked swiftly. Sucking the main discharge from the point of contact. Gentle, almost medical hands bidding the blood flow to retreat down the infected artery to remove more poison. Then, as the Ranger groaned, opening his pack and selecting herbs which he placed over the open wound.

"I've seen Injun medicine-men do this," the Ranger said.

Caine nodded, prepared a simple herbal soup dish in a tiny pot. Made a crude fire from scrub nearby and heated the contents. "Drink this," he said when he was satisfied by the results, pouring the liquid into a tin mug.

The sun sank behind distant mountains and the desert quickly lost its heat. "Where is your horse?" Caine asked eventually.

The Ranger jerked a thumb towards rocks rising to form a shadowy barrier behind them. "He bolted... spooked!"

Caine got to his feet and silently padded off. Given the warmth of blankets, a fire and another healing balm the man would survive. But time was running desperately short...

A month later, Caine entered Twin Forks. He



came into town on foot, immediately noticed the rundown appearance of the once prosperous silver mining community. He trudged down the main street. A horse and rider cut across his path and the horse shied, nearly throwing his owner. Caine reached to grasp the reins, went spinning as a boot kicked his shoulder. Before he could recover the rider dismounted and stuck a .45 into his face.

"Yuh're under arrest," a hard voice growled. A marshal's star gleaming on a worn shirt-front.

Caine got to his feet, picked up his bedroll.

"Over thar," the man snapped, gesturing with his gun. "We ain't got no truck with drifters hyar."

Something about the marshal's eyes reminded Caine of Master Po and he went meekly. Experience had taught him a lesson. Never argue when tempers were aroused. Wait until the ripe time.

By night-fall, Caine wondered if he'd been wrong to surrender so easily. He had not eaten, nor seen a single soul all day. The cell stank of unwashed perspiration from former occupants,

the heat of ancient adobe walls.

The connecting door between the marshal's office and the cell-block opened and a man appeared outlined against an oil-lamp. "Wal," he said, "if'n it ain't my helpin' hand!"

Caine smiled warmly. He recognized the Ranger. And the marshal filling the doorway next.

"I ain't happy lettin' this one loose," the marshal said.

"I'll vouch for him. Fact is, he saved my life. What's the charge?" The Ranger stuck a hand into his pocket and coins clinked.

"Spookin' my horse. Vagrancy. Causin' a disturbance."

Caine waited patiently as the man he'd saved cut the cantankerous marshal down to size and the cell door opened. Not a word had passed his lips. The depth of understanding within him knew the futility of argument, the situation he had determined to rectify. And he recalled, as he stepped free from the cell, another time of silence...





Master Po stood at the end of a plank. On either side was a dark void and, seeming like miles away, a single candle flickered. A small dog barked twice, pulled against the chain which held it tied to the pillar on which the candle rested. "He is lonely and hungry," the blind priest said. "Let us rescue him." So saying, the priest inched forward. His foot felt for the plank and, sightless eyes staring straight ahead, he walked out on the plank. The dog cocked his head, tail sweeping the floor.

Young Caine felt fear rising in him. He did not dare watch nor contemplate that dark void. He could not remember where he had heard about the bottomless pit from which no-one ever returned.

Master Po reached the dog and sank to his knees, fondling the joyous animal. "Come, Grasshopper—over this side."

Caine hesitated, the fear growing into a wild thing inside him.

"Why do you not join me?" Po asked, hands continuing to stroke the quietening dog.

"I am afraid, Master," the youth said.

"There is nothing to fear except fear," the priest said.

"If I fall off the plank..." A sickness roiled in

the young stomach.

"Have faith," Po told his pupil. "No harm shall come to you."

Caine breathed deep and hard, stepped onto the narrow plank. Fixing his gaze on the candle he glided forward... until he came to the midway point. Then, to his horror, he saw Po release the dog and send it sure-footedly bounding across the plank. He teetered, panic killing his balance. And, in the seconds when he flew into the darkness of the void, he screamed...

The dog barked, jumped from the plank and landed in Caine's lap. For a moment the shock of this made the youth open his eyes. He saw Master Po directly above him, a huge smile spreading across the kindly man's face.

"One can believe without seeing, Grasshopper. Faith, a wise man said, moves mountains. Fear creates impossible dark depths."

Caine got to his feet, shut his eyes again. A solid floor covered in black cloth gave him a sensation of comfort. Everything had been 'arranged' to create his fear so that he could discover an inner strength. It was the beginning of his Chi knowledge...

Out on the street the two men parted. Caine conscious of the marshal's gaze following him . . . to the focus of no return.

"He's an uppity rascal," Shep Langley, the Ranger, remarked acidly.



"He is suffering," Caine replied simply.

The man from Texas shrugged and strode off toward the nearest saloon. Caine cut across the street and took up a position beside the barber-shop. From here he could see everything and, he guessed, the marshal could not. Deep down inside he resented the contrariness that had placed him in the cells but, remembering his training, he knew how much the man needed help.

Three hours later a bunch of cowpokes rode into town to celebrate getting paid off for a dusty trail-herd chore. They had steam to let off—innocently. Money to burn on beer and the gambling tables. Most cowboys dreamed about the big poke they could take from a table—poker, dice, faro.

No sooner had the cowmen entered the saloons than gunfire sounded. Caine watched as the marshal came from his office, hand fumbling for his sixgun. Then, abruptly swinging, the lawman re-entered his office to come out within seconds carrying a sawn-off shotgun.

Caine moved into the street, taking a path to intercept the man. If his suspicions were correct he could not allow such a deadly weapon to be used in the confines of a saloon.

"Yuh ag'in," the marshal growled when he finally saw Caine before him. "I tole yuh . . ."

Caine moved like a snake striking, sweeping the shotgun from the lawman's feeble hand. At the same time deftly removing the .45 from its holster.

"I'll nail yore hide to ma wall," the man yelled, lunging forward.

The Shaolin priest smiled grimly, evaded the rush and strode to the office. Leaving the weapons on a desk he locked the street door and confronted the irate marshal. "Trust me, Marshall. I understand your problem . . ."

"I'll whup the livin' daylights outta yuh," the man snarled.

"How? You cannot see well enough." Caine waited while the words sank in. "For many years I had a blind man as friend and teacher. He taught me one very important thing. All men must work together regardless of disabilities and differences of background."

The marshal frowned, peering closely at this lanky young man. "Who the heck are yuh? Durn it, thet Ranger said yuh saved his life!"

Several shots rang out from the direction of the largest gambling palace. Caine sighed. "My name is Kwai Chang Caine. If you wish I will investigate the cause of the disturbance."

The marshal grunted, not wanting to admit that for the first time in his years as a law officer he desperately needed someone by his side. "Are yuh armed?"

"I do not believe in guns," Caine replied simply. "Then yuh can't help!"

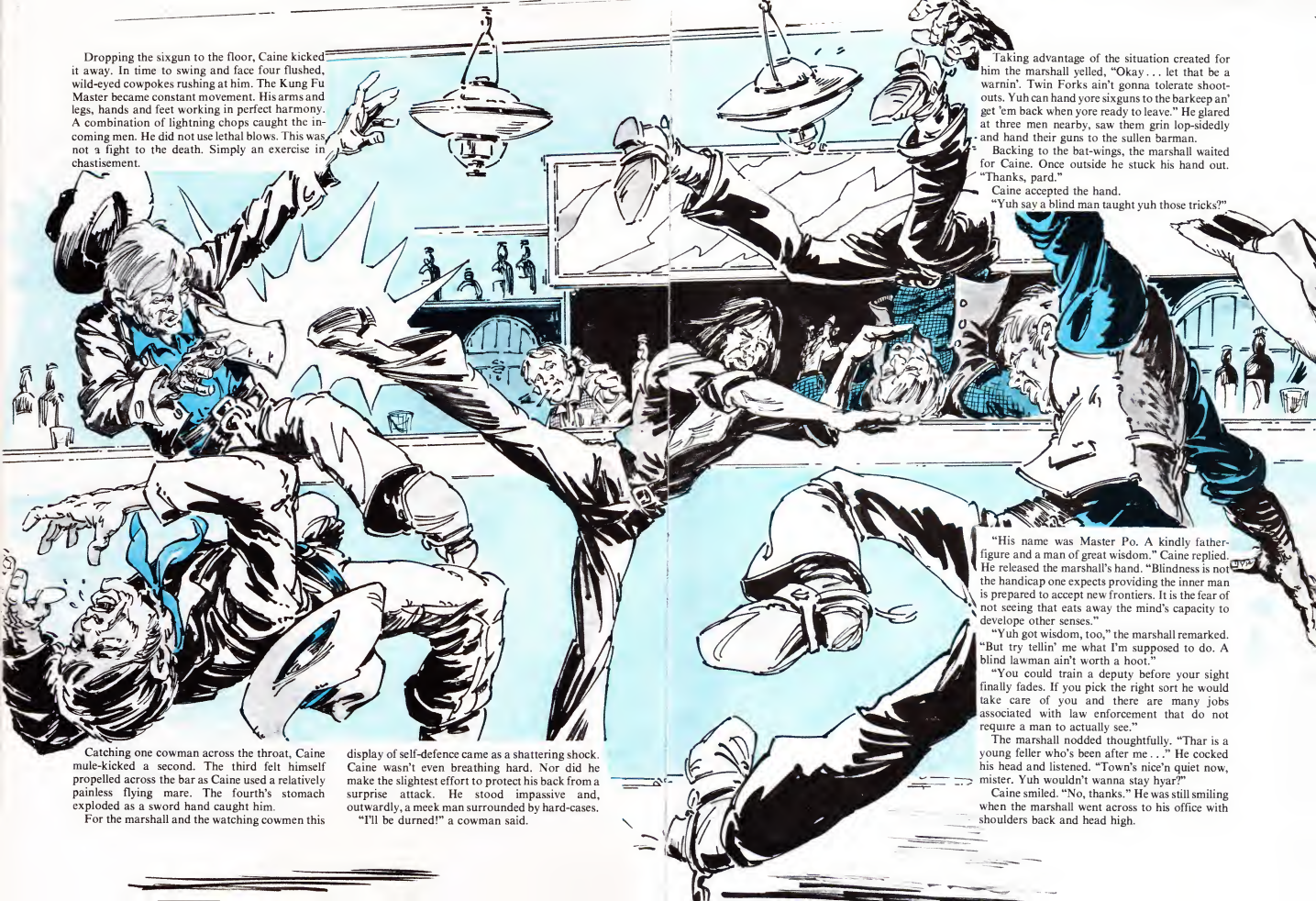


The Shaolin priest raised his eyebrows in a neutral expression. "We shall see," he said and began walking towards the saloon. From the moment of their first brief encounter and the realization that the lawman's reaction had been caused by failing eyesight, Caine had committed himself to protecting the man from his personal torment.

When he strode into the saloon Caine knew the marshal was right behind him. Cowmen crowded the long bar, others already engaged in card games. Some, though, were hellbent on whooping it up. A tall, heavy individual aimed at a spinning

faro wheel and fired four times—fast. Chunks flew from the wheel and yells ripped from the watching drinkers' throats. Encouragement for the re-loading sharpshooter.

Caine went to the man, placed his hand over the gun's cylinder and slowly twisted it from the other's grip. The man was strong, but no match for Caine. As he discovered he was losing face the man shouted and swung a vicious punch. It never landed! Caine's reflexes were sheer grace. A crane's head ward off sent the flashing fist over the priest's head. A left hand spear to the heart sent the man reeling, eyes rolling in agony.



Dropping the sixgun to the floor, Caine kicked it away. In time to swing and face four flushed, wild-eyed cowpokes rushing at him. The Kung Fu Master became constant movement. His arms and legs, hands and feet working in perfect harmony. A combination of lightning chops caught the incoming men. He did not use lethal blows. This was not a fight to the death. Simply an exercise in chastisement.

Catching one cowman across the throat, Caine mule-kicked a second. The third felt himself propelled across the bar as Caine used a relatively painless flying mare. The fourth's stomach exploded as a sword hand caught him.

For the marshal and the watching cowmen this

display of self-defence came as a shattering shock. Caine wasn't even breathing hard. Nor did he make the slightest effort to protect his back from a surprise attack. He stood impassive and, outwardly, a meek man surrounded by hard-cases.

"I'll be durned!" a cowman said.

Taking advantage of the situation created for him the marshal yelled, "Okay... let that be a warning". Twin Forks ain't gonna tolerate shoot-outs. Yuh can hand yore sixguns to the barkeeper an' get 'em back when yore ready to leave." He glared at three men nearby, saw them grin lop-sidedly and hand their guns to the sullen barman.

Backing to the bat-wings, the marshal waited for Caine. Once outside he stuck his hand out. "Thanks, pard."

Caine accepted the hand.

"Yuh say a blind man taught yuh those tricks?"

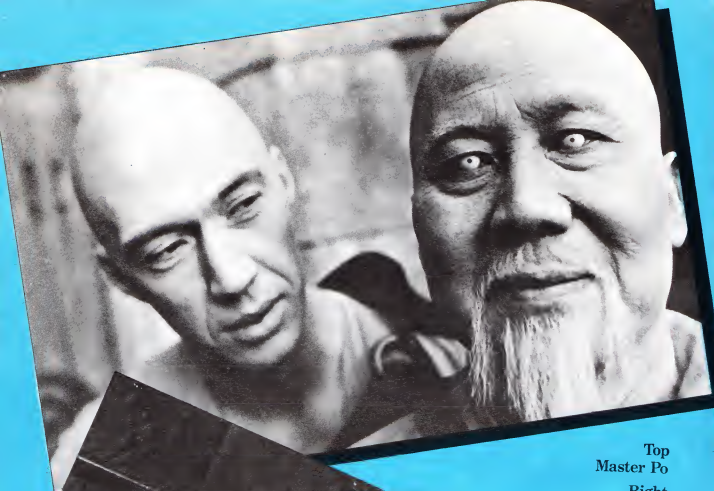
"His name was Master Po. A kindly father-figure and a man of great wisdom." Caine replied. He released the marshal's hand. "Blindness is not the handicap one expects providing the inner man is prepared to accept new frontiers. It is the fear of not seeing that eats away the mind's capacity to develop other senses."

"Yuh got wisdom, too," the marshal remarked. "But try tellin' me what I'm supposed to do. A blind lawman ain't worth a hoot."

"You could train a deputy before your sight finally fades. If you pick the right sort he would take care of you and there are many jobs associated with law enforcement that do not require a man to actually see."

The marshal nodded thoughtfully. "Thar is a young feller who's been after me..." He cocked his head and listened. "Town's nice'n quiet now, mister. Yuh wouldn't wanna stay hyar?"

Caine smiled. "No, thanks." He was still smiling when the marshal went across to his office with shoulders back and head high.



Top
Master Po

Right
Disciple Caine

Below
Master Kan



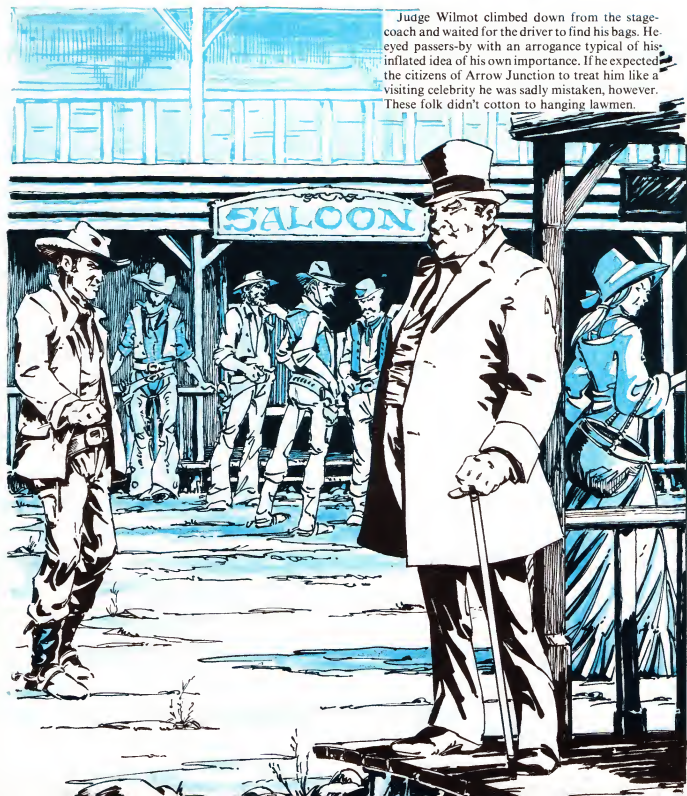
MEN FROM THE MONASTERY



KUNG FU

ACT OF FRIENDSHIP

Judge Wilmot climbed down from the stage-coach and waited for the driver to find his bags. He eyed passers-by with an arrogance typical of his inflated idea of his own importance. If he expected the citizens of Arrow Junction to treat him like a visiting celebrity he was sadly mistaken, however. These folk didn't cotton to hanging lawmen.



"Hiya, Judge," Sheriff Rex Grey said, coming forward. "We've got a lulu of a case this time."

Wilmot lit a cigar, nodded. In his estimation every case he judged was a lulu. And clear cut, too. "What is it all about, Sheriff?"

"A sheepman accused of murdering a rancher's son. We've got seven witnesses for the prosecution and one for the defence."

Judge Wilmot frowned. "Nobody told me it would be a lengthy trial," he complained bitterly "I have other arrangements."

Rex Grey shrugged and helped the driver unload the judge's bags. He was glad of this opportunity to avoid a discussion. He believed in the integrity of the law, not Wilmot-style hurrying through the preliminaries and an inevitable quick hanging.

Wilmot looked at his watch. "Have the court in session within an hour," he ordered . . .

Taking his seat dead on time, Judge Wilmot wasted not one second telling the jury he wanted a verdict quick as possible. He instructed the lawyers to be brief, peered round the courtroom looking for the accused. Only to rest his startled gaze on a lanky young man holding a battered hat in front of his chest in an attitude of respect. There was something strangely serene about those intelligent features.

For Kwai Chang Caine the moment reminded him of a time past. A day when, as a child almost, he had gone with blind Master Po who was scheduled to give evidence on behalf of a known criminal . . .

"Watch and listen, Grasshopper," Po had said. "Justice can often seem cruel to those unfamiliar with court proceedings."

Young Caine watched in open-mouthed amazement. And he listened intently to the arguments for and against a death sentence. No-one, he believed, took an interest in trying to influence the court's president with the man's innocence. He asked the blind Shaolin monk: "Has this accused been on trial before, Master?"

"Many times, Grasshopper," came the whispered reply.

"Then, he is guilty of the crime?"

"It has not been proved."

"Should not they prove that first, Master?" Caine felt puzzled.

"Exactly why I am here, Grasshopper," the priest said, hand on the child's shoulder. "It is not enough to bring a man before his peers. He must be found innocent or guilty of every charge regardless of what has gone before. Remember that . . ."

Judge Wilmot banged his gavel in annoyance and curtly dismissed the defence lawyer's objection on a point of law. "Go ahead," he told a cowman seated in the witness box.

The man winked at a member of the jury, got a grin in return. Caine could see that these twelve men had already decided a verdict. The entire trial was a farce, not least of all the way Wilmot was conducting it.

At long last the seven prosecution witnesses had told their story, practically word perfect. Once or twice the lawyer for the accused sheepman managed to tear a hole in the fabricated stories only to have the judge skilfully work his words around to appear less damaging. Then, it was Caine's turn to address the court.

"Explain, in any way you like, what happened on the night of the shooting," the defence attorney said with a relaxing smile.



Caine closed his eyes, visualized the scene again. "I was sleeping in a barn when the sound of hoofbeats awakened me," the Shaolin priest said. "I went to the door and saw those men . . ." He indicated the witnesses now with eyes open. ". . . ride up to the house. They all carried torches which they lit. When Mister Harmon and his wife came from the house the dead man fired at their feet. Mister Harmon ran into the house and returned with a rifle."

Judge Wilmot sneered. "Caine — that is your name, isn't it?"

"It is."

"Now, Caine — ain't you got it dead wrong. Harmon had the rifle to start with . . ."

"I cannot agree," Caine said softly. He was remembering Master Po's stand again and how the old monk had fought to protect justice from charlatans.

"A hostile witness!" the judge snapped acidly, dismissing Caine with a frowning displeasure.

"Go on, Caine," the lawyer said, hopelessness etched on his face now.

Caine looked directly at Wilmot. "When a bullet narrowly missed his wife's head," he said, "Mister Harmon raised his rifle and fired. At that moment the dead man rode directly into the line of fire . . ."

"The dead man? You mean young Seth Carter?" Wilmot asked.

"That was the name one of the others called out," Caine admitted.

"Then, goshdarn, refer to him as Seth," the judge growled. He looked at his watch which lay open before him. "And let's hurry. I'm late."

"Can one hurry evidence when a man's life is at

stake?" Caine countered.

"You're in contempt of court," Wilmot roared. "Fined ten dollars . . ." He bent forward. "Or thirty days!"

Caine placed ten dollars on the bench, noting the surprise in the judge's eyes. Without reference to the money, the Shaolin priest said, "The death of Mister Carter was an accident. The burning down of Mister Harmon's house and the treatment afforded his wife were deliberate acts of violence."

Wilmot banged his gavel. "Witness dismissed." Turning to the jury he smiled grimly. "You've heard seven good men testify to murder by the accused. We can discount what this Caine says. Now, give me a verdict . . ."

Caine got to his feet and confronted the judge. "The sheriff knows it is not murder. Ask him."

Wilmot grew red in the face. "I warned you, Chink. If I had my way you'd swing at the end of a rope with Harmon. As it is, I sentence you to three months for contempt! Sheriff — take him to the cells!"





By late afternoon, Caine watched the cowmen spill from their saloons and form angry mobs outside the jail. The noise of a carpenter erecting a crude scaffold for the convicted Harmon's hanging on the morrow mingled with the cat-calls from the men.

Sheriff Grey entered and rolled a cigarette as he contemplated Caine through the bars. "I've wired the governor asking him to pardon you."

"My situation is not a cause for alarm. What about Mister Harmon?"

"You're a cool customer," the sheriff remarked. "You hear those guys out there?" He jerked a thumb in the direction of the cell-window. "That's a lynch mob getting up courage."

Caine remained impassive. "They are driven by guilt."

"Because a sheepman is gonna hang?" Grey sounded sarcastic. "I'll keep 'em out, anyway."

Caine sat on his narrow bunk, dropped his head in concentration. One man and two ancient deputies could not stop men like those, he realised. Digging deep inside himself he found *Chi* — inner strength. Momentarily unaware that the sheriff had retreated and locked the door joining cells to office.

Taking a shot gun from its rack, Grey flung the street door open and yelled, "Okay, that's enough. Break it up!"

"Give us the Chink," a short, leathery cowpoke called.

"The only thing anybody gets is a hunk of lead," Grey announced. Glancing up at the hotel directly across the street he noticed Judge Wilnot at a window. Whatever happened to that appointment the judge had been on about? he wondered. Or was the prospect of a lynching and a hanging too much for the sadistic lawman?

A solid piece of wood measuring roughly three feet long hurtled through the air, caught the sheriff on the temple. He slammed back against the building, shotgun falling from his hands. Before he could recover his senses the mob surged forward, overpowered him.



Caine got to his feet, composed. He knew what had to be done and no man was better equipped. When the shouting, swearing cowmen stormed into the cells he let them take him, drag him outside. It struck him as peculiar that none of the men wanted to make Harmon share his fate.

"Rope his arms," a fat man roared, standing back out of it.

Caine tensed and as the grips on him altered to

let a rope snake round him he went into action. He seemed to soar straight up in the air, brushing aside the rope and sending its owner crashing to the ground with a powerful direct kick to the solar plexus. Even in mid-air, Caine twisted and used the steel-hard heel of his left foot to smash in a man's face. Landing, he rolled to one side, cutting the legs from under another pair.

Coming to his feet, Caine took up a dragon





stance. A flat hammer fist pounded into a huge brute of a cowman rushing in like a bull. The man stopped in his tracks, sank to his knees. The Shaolin priest didn't bother to look down. He knew the blow would leave the other unconscious for an hour. A hand sword flashed, the movement a delightful blur and another would-be lyncher was out of the fray.

Some of the men had moved away, unable to believe their eyes. From his hotel room window, Judge Wilmot watched the slaughter. Rage mottled his face. He felt he was under attack by this upstart Chinaman. He whirled, raced to an open bag and seized a .44 Colt.

Meanwhile, Caine was carrying the fight to the crowd. Feet slashing, he alternated gracefully from eagle to crane to tiger stance. His piston-like

arms moved in, out, sideways. Those paralyzing fists clenched, unclenched. First hitting with hammer blows. Then, switching in a split-second to ward off a near miss. Becoming a lethal instrument of justice the next.

Wilmot aimed, had Kwai Chang Caine in his sights. Squeezed the trigger . . .

Caine went backwards, heaved from under the dead weight of the man who had leapt at him in the precise moment of Wilmot's dastardly assassination attempt.

Every eye turned and stared upwards.

For Sheriff Grey the explosive noise completed his recovery. His head hurt like fury, his eyes not yet fully in focus. But he could see the smoking six-gun in Judge Wilmot's hand. And the battleground slowly clearing as the lynch mob settled for licking their many wounds.

Going to the Chinese-American, Grey asked, "Is he dead?"

"Yes. It was an accident. The bullet was intended for me."

"You're a peculiar guy, Caine," the sheriff said. "Ain't you worried he'll take another shot?"

"A man only has so much bad blood in his head and heart," Caine replied.

"Let's get you back in jail," Grey said. "Then, the judge and I have some talking to do."

By morning the governor's wire had arrived. Grey read it to his prisoners. "Stay of execution granted. Contempt charge stands until circuit judge Walter Millen arrives."

Caine gazed from his cell window. The scaffold had been finished by dawn, now stood stark and menacing. A few ordinary townsfolk averted their heads as they walked past.

"Judge Wilmot has written a letter of resignation," the sheriff continued. "I've charged him with attempted murder of an unarmed man. One of my deputies is with him."

"I shall testify," Caine said softly.

"I wish more of our people thought as much about justice as you, Caine," the lawman remarked and left the cells.

"If I get outta this alive I'm going somewhere a man can breath in peace," the sheepman said through his bars.

"To farm?" Caine asked.

"Yeah — but no more sheep. I wanna watch things grow from the earth . . ."

Caine smiled. Master Po had said that justice sprang from the fertile earth of man's mind. Now and then there would be a drought but providing irrigation canals were kept free of slime, justice would always thrive and grow stronger . . . and stronger.

"Yeah," the sheepman said to himself, "I'm gonna watch things grow!"

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